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Thus Eleazar Albin was “lately deceased” in February, 1741/2 (1742 new style), and perhaps a further search in contemporary records will establish a more precise date. I have not yet located a copy of the sale catalogue; it should certainly be of great interest. — Dr. RONALD S. WILKINSON, The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540; The American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024.

GEOMYZA BREVISETA CZ. AND G. VENUSTA MG. (DIPT.: OPOMYZIDAE) IN WEST KENT, THE LATTER CONFIRMED AS BRITISH. — When in 1967 (*Ent. mon. Mag.*, **103**: 172) I recorded the former of these species from Oxon., there were only a few British specimens known from single localities in Suffolk, Hants., and Somerset. Recently, however, J. W. Ismay (1974, *ibid.*, **110**: 103) has recorded it from Egham, Surrey (in numbers), East Kent, and Dorset, and from four localities in Norfolk. I can now report that *G. breviseta* occurs in the London suburbs. Between 16.vi and 5.vii.72 I took four of these flies, on different days, about the base of a poplar stump and on the grass around it in a lane beyond the end of my former garden at Blackheath; another while grubbing for beetles, etc., on short turf in a heathy spot at Charlton (30.iv.74); and finally one at rest on a young willow sapling in a park in the same area (14.vii.76). The fact that the species has in general to be sought at the roots of grasses, thus seldom finding its way into the dipterist’s net, doubtless accounts for its apparent rarity.

Of still more interest is the capture of a ♀ *Geomyza venusta* Mg. by general sweeping on “Darwin’s Bank” — a chalky hillside at Downe, West Kent — on 8th July, 1973. Though Collin (1945, *Ent. Rec.*, **57**: 15) had not seen a British specimen, he included it in his key to our species as one which had been misrecorded but which could well occur here, and

I have seen no further reference to it. I feel confident that my specimen is correctly determined, since it runs straight to *venusta* in the key and cannot be made to fit any other species included. I thank my friend Mr. J. M. Chalmers-Hunt for the opportunity of collecting at the above attractive spot. — A. A. ALLEN.

THE HAZARDS OF MOTH HUNTING. — It was a cool, deceptively clear night on the 22nd of February when Mr. Parsons and I converged upon Abbot's Wood for one of the most bizarre collecting trips in my experience.

In the fading light of that February evening we assembled two actinic traps on the outskirts of the wood. One was sited in an exposed position, and the other was afforded a little shelter by some denuded bushes. The lights had just been switched on when a shower of rain persuaded us to retire hurriedly beneath a hedge. A few minutes later the rain ceased and we began the evening by taking numerous *Theria rupicaprarica* D. & S. and countless examples of *Erannis marginaria* Fabr. showing marked variation. After a good collecting session in the wood, we emerged and noticed several car headlamps in the vicinity of our traps. Not wishing to invite the attention of the public at large, we decided to rescue them. As we neared the site of all the activity we were confronted by a nervous young constable and three members of the farming fraternity. He was under the mistaken impression that we were poaching, and was sadly disappointed when examination of our suspiciously bulging bags revealed sundry mothing impedimenta and the writer's vacuum flask.

It later transpired that our lights had been reported to the police station as a "Martian Invasion" by a score of distraught motorists! The constable had been on the point of calling for reinforcements when we appeared and concluded that chapter of local history. — MARK HADLEY, 7 Beverington Close, Eastbourne, Sussex.

SCYTHRIS FLETCHERELLA MEYRICK IN KENT. — On the 14th May, 1977 Mr. Chalmers-Hunt and I visited a well-known locality on the downs in Kent and found larvae of the seldom recorded *Scythris fletcherella*. I first found the larvae at the same locality in 1973 and have done so on several occasions since, e.g. 1.v.76 and 17.v.76. The species is probably more widespread than records suggest but the larval habits are not well-known. The larva spins a loose web on *Helianthemum nummularium* and this web eventually extends over the lower leaves of several shoots. A tube is formed down into the moss and debris and the larva can withdraw rapidly into the tube when disturbed. The larva eats the upper surface of the leaves which gives the eaten leaves a whitish appearance. Foodplant growing over moss is preferred. — J. ROCHE, 16 Frimley Court, Sidcup Hill, Sidcup, Kent.